

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE
EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA

Alexandria Division

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

v.

ANTONIO EDGARDO JOVEL
a/k/a “Mario”

Defendant.

Case No. 1:25-MJ-117

AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF CRIMINAL COMPLAINT AND ARREST WARRANT

I, Shane D. Dana, being duly sworn, state as follows:

I. INTRODUCTION AND AGENT BACKGROUND

1. This affidavit is submitted in support of a criminal complaint and arrest warrant charging that on or about June 8, 2023, in the Eastern District of Virginia, the defendant ANTONIO EDGARDO JOVEL did knowingly distribute a mixture and substance containing a detectable amount of Fentanyl, a Schedule II controlled substance, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1).

2. I am a Special Agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (the “FBI”) and have been so employed since November 2003. I am currently assigned to Squad CR-7 of the Washington Field Office’s Criminal Investigative Division where my focus is on investigating violations of federal narcotics laws. I am a law enforcement officer of the United States within the meaning of Title 5, United States Code, Section 8401(17)(A)(i)(I).

3. I have conducted and participated in numerous investigations resulting in the arrest and conviction of drug distributors and the seizure of controlled substances. Many of these

investigations have involved the distribution of Schedule I and II narcotics, including heroin and fentanyl. I have received training in drug identification, narcotics investigations, search and seizure, covert communications, and surveillance operations. As a result, I am familiar with the use, effects, and methods of distribution of controlled substances.

4. The facts and information contained in this affidavit are based upon my training and experience, participation in this and other investigations, personal knowledge, and observations during the course of this investigation, as well as the observations of other federal agents and individuals involved in this investigation. All observations not personally made by me were relayed to me by the individuals who made them or were conveyed to me by my review of the records, documents, and other physical evidence obtained during the course of the investigation. This affidavit is meant to convey information necessary to support probable cause for the requested complaint and arrest warrants and is not intended to include each and every fact observed by me or known to the government. The inferences and conclusions I draw from the evidence included in this affidavit are what I believe based on my training, experience, and knowledge of the investigation.

II. BACKGROUND CONCERNING FENTANYL

5. Fentanyl is a schedule II controlled substance and is a synthetic opioid pain reliever that comes in the form of transdermal patches and lozenges. Fentanyl is often used to treat severe pain. Fentanyl is estimated to be 50 to 100 times more powerful than morphine. Fentanyl is also being produced in clandestine labs domestically and abroad and distributed through traditional opioid networks, and more recently by way of darknet exchanges. Illicitly produced fentanyl is often combined with heroin or other substances to increase potency or add an opioid affect to an otherwise non-opioid drug. It is common for drugs represented as heroin or other substances by

distributors to be found to contain fentanyl when seized by law enforcement. Fentanyl and other synthetic opioid related deaths have increased dramatically since 2013. The Centers for Disease Control - Wide-ranging Online Data for Epidemiologic Research (WONDER) estimates that 70,601 persons died as a result of synthetic opioids in 2021.

6. Since 2019, fentanyl laced counterfeit prescription drugs have flooded black markets and have become the most prolific form of fentanyl. Law enforcement officers commonly find dealers selling round blue pills imprinted with “M” and “30” which are mimic the markings associated with oxycodone 30mg pills manufactured by Mallinckrodt Pharmaceutical. The widespread distribution of the counterfeit pills is marked by popular culture terminology such as “blues,” “M-30s,” “Perc’s,” and “Perc-30’s.” “Perc” is a commonly used slang reference that is short for “Percocet” which is a name brand prescription pain killer that contains oxycodone. For the purposes of this Affidavit, these counterfeit oxycodone pills containing fentanyl will be referenced simply as “fentanyl pills.” Trafficking of fentanyl pills in this counterfeit prescription pill form has dominated the black market in recent years, significantly outpacing traditional illegal distribution of legitimate pharmaceutical grade prescription drugs.

7. A byproduct of this massive increase of fentanyl distribution is violence between competitors or between buyers and sellers. Prices for fentanyl pills range between \$1 per pill (or even lower) and \$30 per pill (or even higher) leading to large potential profit margins that attracts stiff competition. Large amounts of cash are exchanged during fentanyl pill transactions, increasing the temptation by dealers to use violence to rob each other. Such robberies are commonly referred to among dealers as committing a “rip” or a “lick.”

III. BACKGROUND - REGIONAL OPEN-AIR DRUG MARKETPLACE IN PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY, VIRGINIA – “The Jungle”.

8. In or about January of 2022, I became aware of an epicenter for fentanyl distribution (primarily in the form of fentanyl pills) within Prince William County, Virginia. My investigation revealed this marketplace to include the southwest portion of the parking lot for the 7-Eleven convenience store located at 13990 Jefferson Davis Highway, Woodbridge, Virginia (hereinafter “the 7-Eleven”), multiple rooms rented at the Potomac Inn Hotel located a short distance away at 13964 Jefferson Davis Highway, Woodbridge, Virginia (hereinafter “the Potomac Inn”), and the previously wooded area behind both of those locations connected by trails that are primarily located on property owned by the Prince William County Public Schools. This formerly wooded area was referred to by the dealers and their customers as “The Jungle.” Dealers operating out of the Potomac Inn were known to change rooms at the hotel frequently and alter their distribution activity depending on the presence of law enforcement activity in the area.

9. I work with PWCPD’s Violent Crime Unit, Narcotics Unit, and the Gang Unit, and I have been previously made aware of many investigations that have had a nexus to this epicenter that includes the Potomac Inn, the 7-Eleven, and “The Jungle.” I reviewed the line-item calls for service sheet for the 7-Eleven and the Potomac Inn provided to me by PWCPD. The investigations and calls for service relate to shootings, stabbings, murder, overdoses, assaults, narcotics distribution, and more. Data I reviewed from a crime analyst for PWCPD showed dramatic increases in calls for service for the 7-Eleven and Potomac Inn between 2020 and September 2022. The nature and volume of crime and escalation led Prince William County to make enforcement of this area a high priority.

10. In support of this effort, Special Agents of the FBI conducted regular surveillance of the 7-Eleven and the Potomac Inn beginning in or about May of 2022. During periods of

surveillance, observations included frequent apparent hand-to-hand exchanges in the Southwest parking area of the 7-Eleven, persons going in and out of the wooden fencing around the dumpster of the 7-Eleven, persons coming to the 7-Eleven for the sole purpose of brief trips into the adjacent wooded area, persons selling what was suspected to be fentanyl pills out of bags that were seen hanging in trees in the wooded area, exchanges of cash, exchanges of property, persons under the influence, and more conduct that led me to conclude the area was a regional drug marketplace. Many of the persons who appeared to be buyers would come and go. Other individual appeared to be present every day and have relationships and roles consistent with supporting a drug marketplace. A location with this type of overt narcotics dealing is often referred to by law enforcement as an “open air drug market.”

11. Heavy police presence, fences, tree removal, and narcotics investigation operations were part of an effort by PWCPD beginning in January of 2023, aimed at disrupting the crime epicenter known as “The Jungle.” The result was a series of relocations of “The Jungle” by those individuals who frequented or operated within the open-air drug market. Each time law enforcement took action to disrupt or dismantle the currently operating “The Jungle”, a new meeting location would emerge, typically in a forested area. Despite moving physical locations, the name would remain “The Jungle”.

12. These various locations for “The Jungle” have had tents or tarps where people stay, persons selling legal (but often stolen) items such as merchandise and food, persons selling illicit items such as narcotics, persons using illicit narcotics such as fentanyl and cocaine, and prostitution activity. In some cases, the criminal conduct withing “The Jungle” is hidden in the backdrop of homeless encampments, or locations where individuals can recruit or hire day laborers.

13. A task force including detectives of the Prince William County Police Department, Manassas City Police Department, Manassas Park Police Department, and Special Agents of the FBI, Department of Homeland Security U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (DHS-ICE), and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), utilizing confidential informants (CI's) and undercover officers (UC's) have conducted numerous investigations that have provided law enforcement insight into the drug networks that supply "The Jungle" and its various evolutions that have burdened Prince William County, Virginia.

IV. PURPOSE OF THE AFFIDAVIT AND OVERVIEW OF THE INVESTIGATION

14. This affidavit has been prepared to set forth evidence in support of an application for a criminal complaint and arrest warrant for ANTONIO EDGARDO JOVEL, (hereinafter "JOVEL") who is also known as "Mario" who is currently in law enforcement custody after being arrested based upon probable cause on the morning of March 3, 2025.

15. I have participated in the investigation of JOVEL and his associates beginning in or around July 2022. This investigation included source interviews, surveillance operations, and controlled purchase operations which have led to evidence showing that JOVEL is a narcotics distributor. During this investigation, JOVEL sold narcotics at or near the regional open-air drug marketplace called "The Jungle" located in Prince William County, Virginia, as well as at other locations within the Eastern District of Virginia.

16. The investigation has revealed that JOVEL lives at **** Joshua Tree Circle, Fredericksburg, VA (hereinafter "SUBJECT RESIDENCE"). The investigation has further revealed that JOVEL drives a grey 2008 Chevrolet Impala with VA Tag: UCJ4709 (hereinafter "SUBJECT VEHICLE"), which is registered to JOVEL's family member, PERSON-1. As part of this investigation surveillance was conducted in the area of the SUBJECT RESIDENCE and

the SUBJECT VEHICLE was observed at that residence. On March 3, 2025, when JOVEL was arrested at the SUBJECT RESIDENCE, the SUBJECT VEHICLE was observed parked in front of the SUBJECT RESIDENCE.

17. To document the distribution activity by “Mario,” now identified as JOVEL, a series of eight (8) controlled purchases of fentanyl pills from JOVEL were conducted by law enforcement utilizing a law enforcement confidential informant (hereinafter “CI-1”). During two of the controlled purchases the defendant also distributed cocaine to CI-1.

18. In addition to the controlled purchases from JOVEL, CI-1 also made controlled purchases of narcotics from other targets of the larger investigation into “The Jungle.” CI-1 was debriefed and provided significant details about “The Jungle” and the persons who supplied the addicted population with narcotics. CI-1 was interviewed multiple times by law enforcement as part of this investigation. CI-1 was familiar with the narcotics distribution activity at the 7-Eleven, the Potomac Inn, and the surrounding area.

19. CI-1 has two state misdemeanor drug convictions and one federal felony immigration conviction. CI-1 has struggled with a substance use disorder for over 10 years. At some point during the time he was cooperating with law enforcement CI-1 suffered a relapse with his addiction to cocaine causing delays in the investigation and ultimately termination of the use of CI-1 in proactive cooperation. CI-1 violated the terms of his supervised release related to his federal conviction, and was found in violation of the terms of his release on four occasions between May of 2023 and June of 2024. The basis of CI-1’s violations of supervised release related to positive drug screens, missed appointments with probation, and lack of contact with the assigned probation officer.

20. Through the course of the investigation, CI-1 has participated in multiple controlled purchase operations (both from JOVEL and also from other targets of the larger investigation) that were documented by way of audio and video recording devices. Law enforcement has reviewed these audio and video recordings which confirm and corroborate the information CI-1 has provided to law enforcement concerning the controlled purchase operations and CI-1's interactions with JOVEL and others. CI-1 has provided accurate information that has been verified by additional investigative methods including surveillance and corroborative witness interviews. I therefore consider CI-1 to be a reliable source of information.

V. PROBABLE CAUSE

Interviews of Confidential Informant (CI-1):

21. CI-1 is a former customer of JOVEL and has a history of buying crack cocaine from JOVEL's associates. I first interviewed CI-1 on July 5, 2022, along with detectives of the Prince William County Police Department. I spoke with CI-1 regularly during this investigation and CI-1 participated in controlled purchase of narcotics operations at the direction of law enforcement. During the initial debriefing of CI-1, CI-1 told us about a man who goes by "Mario" who sells narcotics. CI-1 explained that the individual sells crack cocaine and fentanyl pills at the open-air drug market known as "The Jungle." CI-1 identified the following surveillance photo (**Image 1**) of JOVEL, as "Mario."

Image 1



Identification of JOVEL

22. JOVEL was identified by the FBI on March 3, 2025, during an arrest operation that targeted PERSON-1, who was at the time was believed by law enforcement to be “Mario.” During that operation, FBI agents encountered and detained PERSON-1 outside of the SUBJECT RESIDENCE. PERSON-1 spoke with the FBI agents and denied being involved in any narcotics distribution activity. It was discovered that there were other individuals inside of the SUBJECT RESIDENCE. FBI agents approached the front door of the SUBJECT RESIDENCE and observed JOVEL looking out through a window of the SUBJECT RESIDENCE. FBI agents noticed that JOVEL had a similar appearance to PERSON-1. Upon observing PERSON-1 and JOVEL in person, FBI agents believed that JOVEL could in fact be “Mario.”

23. FBI agents then made contact with the occupants of the SUBJECT RESIDENCE and were granted permission to come inside the SUBJECT RESIDENCE to speak with the occupants. FBI agents then spoke to JOVEL inside of the SUBJECT RESIDENCE after advising JOVEL of his Miranda rights and warnings in Spanish. JOVEL agreed to speak to the FBI agents and made admissions to his involvement in drug distribution. Specifically, after initially minimizing his involvement in drug distribution, JOVEL admitted to FBI agents that he distributed fentanyl pills in the past and provided details such as the price he charged for fentanyl pills. JOVEL also identified himself as the individual depicted in photographs and videos of several of the controlled purchases of narcotics (including fentanyl pills) that are detailed later in this Affidavit. JOVEL’s admissions included JOVEL identifying himself as the individual in the recording of the June 8, 2023 controlled purchase in which JOVEL distributed approximately 250 fentanyl pills. Additionally, during the interview of JOVEL he admitted that at times he drove the SUBJECT VEHICLE, but JOVEL stated that the SUBJECT VEHICLE belonged to PERSON-1.

24. Following JOVEL's admission to distributing fentanyl pills, JOVEL was arrested based upon probable cause. PERSON-1 was not further detained.

Controlled Purchases from JOVEL by CI-1

25. At the direction of law enforcement, CI-1 made eight (8) controlled purchases of narcotics from JOVEL between November 8, 2022, and June 13, 2023. In total, CI-1 purchased over 500 fentanyl pills, with an approximate combined weight of 53.51 grams, from JOVEL. All of the controlled purchases took place at locations within the Eastern District of Virginia, and all were recorded via audio and video recording devices.

26. Prior to each of the controlled purchases from JOVEL, law enforcement officers met with CI-1 at a law enforcement staging location to brief CI-1 on the operation, provide CI-1 with government buy funds for the purchase, and to equip CI-1 with covert recording device(s) and a transmitter both of which were capable of recording audio and video.¹ CI-1 was routinely searched both before and after each controlled purchase to ensure that CI-1 was free of all contraband, such as currency (aside from the government buy funds provided by law enforcement), narcotics (aside from the narcotics purchased during the controlled purchase), and weapons. Following each controlled purchase, CI-1 returned to the law enforcement staging location where CI-1 turned over the narcotics that had been purchased from JOVEL and CI-1 debriefed with law enforcement officers. As much as possible, law enforcement maintained surveillance of CI-1 throughout the controlled purchase operations. When possible, law enforcement conducted further

¹ The covert recording device utilized during this investigation produces video footage that appears as a mirror image, or reversed image, of the events that were recorded. For example, in the video footage (and screenshots of the video footage) the driver's side of a vehicle appears to be on the right side of that vehicle, when in fact the driver's side of the vehicle is on the left side of that vehicle. Similarly, in the video footage (and screenshots of the video footage) what appears to be the right hand of a person is in fact that person's left hand, and vice-versa.

surveillance of the targets of the investigation before and/or after the completion of the controlled purchases.

First Controlled Purchase from JOVEL – November 8, 2022

27. On November 8, 2022, CI-1 conducted a controlled purchase from JOVEL of 13 fentanyl pills, and a bag of suspected cocaine weighing approximately 8.2 grams, in exchange for \$150 in FBI Funds. CI-1 met JOVEL in front of the Sports Barbershop next to the 7-Eleven near “The Jungle” where JOVEL distributed the fentanyl pills to CI-1. JOVEL also provided his contact number to CI-1.

Second Controlled Purchase from JOVEL – November 8, 2022

28. On November 8, 2022, following the first controlled purchase from JOVEL, CI-1 conducted a second controlled purchase from JOVEL of 40 fentanyl pills in exchange for \$400 of FBI funds. Following the first controlled purchase, CI-1 had a telephonic conversation with JOVEL where the two agreed to meet so CI-1 could purchase an additional 40 fentanyl pills. JOVEL explained to CI-1 that he needed to first get the pills, and each would cost \$11. JOVEL later returned to the same meeting location in the SUBJECT VEHICLE, and JOVEL then distributed 40 fentanyl pills to CI-1. The 40 fentanyl pills purchased from JOVEL were tested by the DEA’s Mid Atlantic Laboratory and confirmed to be fentanyl with a combined weight of 4.5 grams.

29. **Image 2** and **Image 3** are screenshots taken from the recorded video footage of the November 8, 2022, controlled purchase, and appear below:

Image 2:



Image 3:



Third Controlled Purchase from JOVEL – November 9, 2022

30. On November 9, 2022, CI-1 conducted a controlled purchase from JOVEL of 40 fentanyl pills, and 6 yellow zip-lock baggies that each contained suspected crack cocaine (totaling 1.3 grams), in exchange for \$540 of FBI funds. The 40 fentanyl pills were tested by the DEA's Mid Atlantic Laboratory and confirmed to be fentanyl and weigh 4.5 grams.

Fourth Controlled Purchase from JOVEL – November 10, 2022

31. On November 10, 2022, CI-1 conducted a controlled purchase from JOVEL of 27 fentanyl pills in exchange for \$350 of FBI funds. The controlled purchase occurred in the wooded area referred to as "The Jungle" behind the 7-Eleven. The 27 fentanyl pills were tested by the DEA's Mid Atlantic Laboratory and confirmed to be fentanyl with a combined weight of 3.06 grams. **Image 4** and **Image 5** are screenshots taken from the recorded video footage of the November 10, 2022, controlled purchase, and appear below:

Image 4:



Image 5:



Fifth Controlled Purchase from JOVEL – November 21, 2022

32. On November 21, 2022, CI-1 conducted a controlled purchase from JOVEL for 9 fentanyl pills in exchange for FBI Funds. The controlled purchase took place inside the SUBJECT VEHICLE, at a location in Prince William County, Virginia. The 9 fentanyl pills were tested by the DEA's Mid Atlantic Laboratory and confirmed to be fentanyl with a combined weight of 0.85 grams. **Image 6** is a screenshot taken from the recorded video footage of the November 21, 2022, controlled purchase, and appears below:

Image 6:



Sixth Controlled Purchase from JOVEL – April 6, 2023

33. On April 6, 2023, CI-1 conducted a controlled purchase from JOVEL for 40 fentanyl pills in exchange for \$400 in FBI funds. The purchase occurred at an area that was at that time known as the “New Jungle” located at a wooded area near 1701 Featherstone Rd., Woodbridge, Virginia. CI-1 walked into the woods to a meeting location where approximately 20 persons were congregating in proximity to tents and an overhead shelter built with a tarp. CI-1 then met JOVEL and followed him to the SUBJECT VEHICLE where JOVEL distributed the 40 fentanyl pills to CI-1. The 40 fentanyl pills were tested by the DEA’s Mid Atlantic Laboratory and confirmed to be fentanyl with a combined weight of 4.6 grams. **Image 7** is a screenshot taken from the recorded video footage of the April 6, 2023, controlled purchase, and appears below:

Image 7:



Seventh Controlled Purchase from JOVEL – June 8, 2023

34. On June 8, 2023, CI-1 conducted a controlled purchase from JOVEL for approximately 250 fentanyl pills in exchange for \$2,350 of FBI funds. JOVEL directed CI-1 to a meeting location along Randall Drive in Woodbridge, Virginia, within the Eastern District of Virginia. CI-1 met JOVEL and followed him to SUBJECT VEHICLE, where JOVEL then distributed the 250 fentanyl pills to CI-1. The fentanyl pills were tested by the DEA's Mid Atlantic Laboratory and confirmed to be fentanyl with a combined weight of 25.11 grams. **Image 8** and **Image 9** are screenshots taken from the recorded video footage of the June 8, 2023, controlled purchase, and appears below:

Image 8:



Image 9:



35. As previously mentioned in this Affidavit, on March 3, 2025, JOVEL identified himself to FBI Agents as the individual in the recordings of the June 8, 2023 controlled purchase in which JOVEL distributed the approximately 250 fentanyl pills to CI-1.

Eighth Controlled Purchase from JOVEL – June 13, 2023

36. On June 13, 2023, CI-1 conducted a controlled purchase from JOVEL for approximately 100 fentanyl pills in exchange for \$1,029 of FBI funds. JOVEL directed CI-1 to a meeting location in the Woodbridge Square Shopping Mall where he was parked in the SUBJECT VEHICLE. JOVEL was accompanied by a Hispanic male that CHS identified as “Manny” who has been observed meeting with other drug distributors in the area during other controlled purchases. “Manny” was in the front passenger seat but moved to the back seat of SUBJECT VEHICLE to make room for CI-1 to sit up front with JOVEL. CI-1 got inside SUBJECT VEHICLE where JOVEL distributed approximately 100 fentanyl pills to CI-1. The fentanyl pills were tested by the DEA’s Mid Atlantic Laboratory and confirmed to be fentanyl with a combined weight of 10.89 grams. **Image 10** is a screenshot taken from the recorded video footage of the June 13, 2023, controlled purchase, and appear below:

Image 10:



VI. CONCLUSION

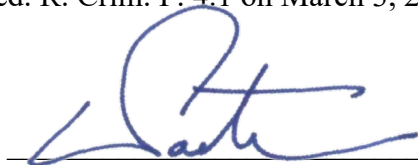
37. Based on the facts set forth in this affidavit, I submit there is probable cause to believe that on or about June 8, 2023, within the Eastern District of Virginia, ANTONIO EDGARDO JOVEL did knowingly distribute a mixture and substance containing a detectable amount of Fentanyl, a Schedule II controlled substance, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1).

Respectfully submitted,

Shane Dana

Shane D. Dana
Special Agent
Federal Bureau of Investigation

Subscribed and sworn to me by telephone in accordance
with Fed. R. Crim. P. 4.1 on March 3, 2025.



Honorable William B. Porter
United States Magistrate Judge
Alexandria, Virginia